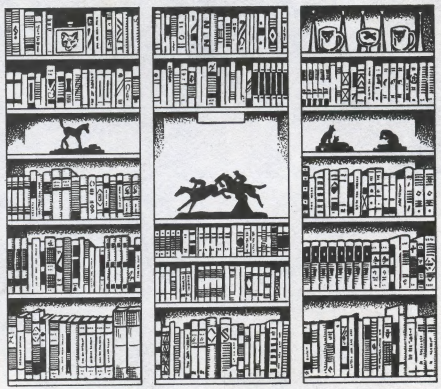

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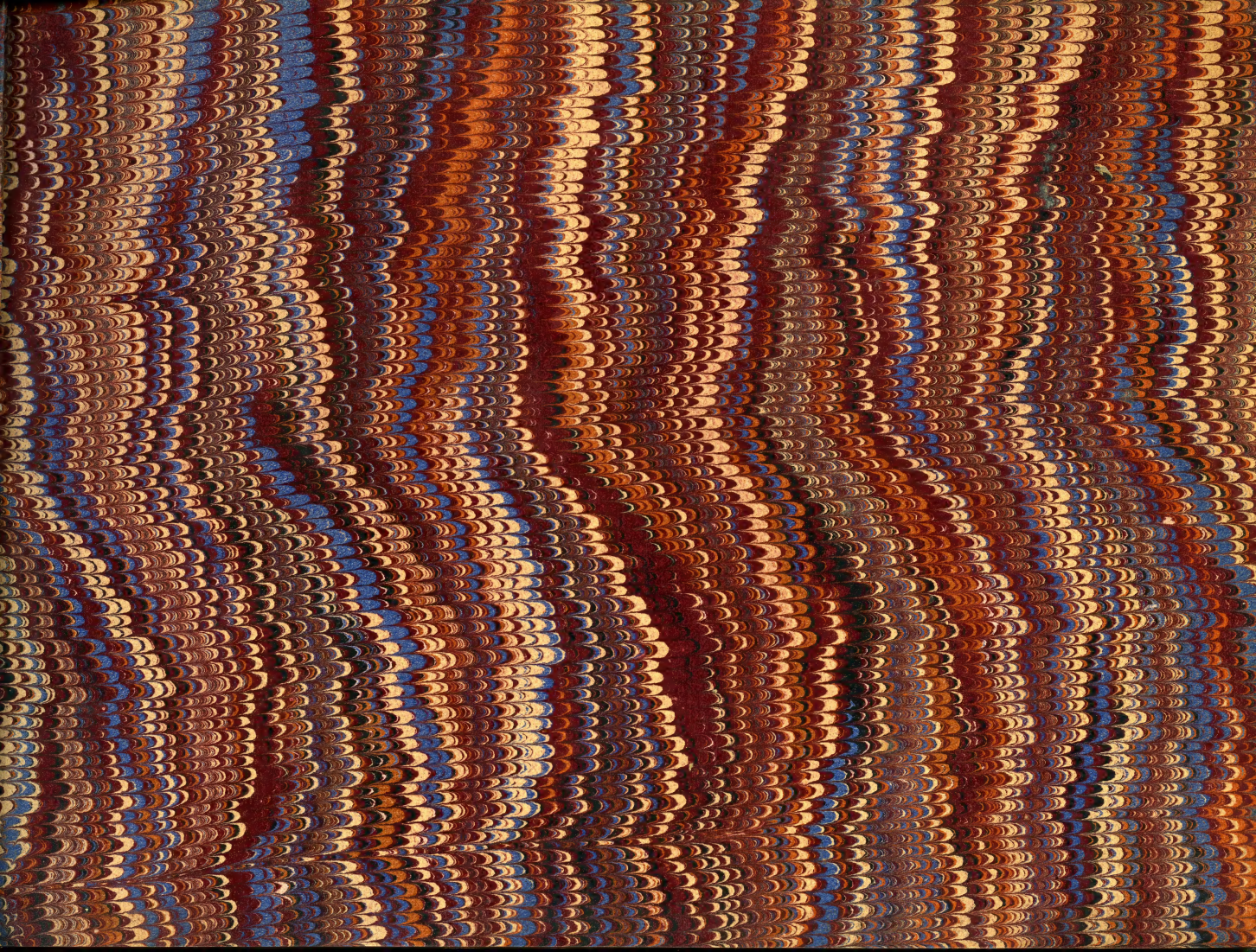

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Howitt's

ANGLER'S MANUAL.

EMBELLISHED WITH

TWELVE ETCHINGS.

Howitt

Fly fishing

THE

ANGLER'S MANUAL;

OR,

CONCISE LESSONS OF EXPERIENCE,

WHICH THE PROFICIENT

IN THE DELIGHTFUL RECREATION OF ANGLING WILL NOT DESPISE, AND
THE LEARNER WILL FIND THE ADVANTAGE OF PRACTISING;

CONTAINING

USEFUL INSTRUCTION

ON EVERY APPROVED METHOD OF ANGLING,

AND PARTICULARLY ON

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE HAND AND ROD IN EACH METHOD.

EMBELLISHED

WITH TWELVE PLATES,

OF FISH, FISHING, BAITS, AND TACKLE,

DESIGNED AND ETCHED

BY S. HOWITT.

LIVERPOOL:

PRINTED BY G. F. HARRIS,

FOR SAMUEL BAGSTER, STRAND, LONDON.

1808.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT may seem to persons who take no pleasure in Angling, that too much has already been published upon the subject; and to some who do, that what has been said is sufficient; but the editor of this little work believes, that those who know most of the amusement will agree with him, that there is at present no one book which comprises and describes, in little compass, the various modes of using the ROD, plainly enough to be of much use to the many, who with great inclination to the sport, have little acquaintance with the method by which, only, fish are to be taken. He hopes, therefore, if he puts together, without any extraneous matter, what has been said to the purpose before, with such observations as no short experience has enabled him to make,—embellished with good representations of the different species of river and pond fish usually angled for,—designs illustrative of the several kinds of angling,—and the most necessary baits and tackle;—the whole may not prove unacceptable.

Should the reader find himself in want of fuller or more particular instructions than the following pages convey,—the editor recommends *the seventh edition* of

Walton and Cotton's "Complete Angler," with notes by Hawkins, published by Mr. Bagster, of the Strand, London.

IF we intend to practice any art with success, it seems advisable, in the first instance, to procure requisite implements; and this an angler can no way do more effectually, than at the fishing-tackle shops in London.

Bag-rods, with short joints, are very conveniently packed and carried; but they are heavy, and, without much attention, are apt to separate in fishing. For use near home, rods of two, three, or four joints are better: the difference in regard to length and strength, adapted to the various kinds of fishing, will be found under the proper heads.

Multiplying-wheels are preferable to the common, because with them you can wind up your *line* in time to prevent a fish from slackening it, by running in upon you; an artifice they are aware of, and frequently practise.

Fly-lines without knots, spun tapering from top to bottom, are neatest and best, and are to be had of any length you please.

Hooks should be carefully tried and chosen, both in respect to temper and *point*, which many prefer bent, as usual, in the shank a little to one side; but the editor thinks the Carlisle, or Irish, which are set exactly even, both hook and hold a fish with greater certainty.

Floats, of different sorts and sizes.

A *tin kettle*, to hold live *baits;* oval-shaped, wide at bottom, narrow at top, with holes in the lid, to give air to the fish, and the outside well painted.

Landing-net, for trout and pike, should be, when properly hung, two feet in diameter, the mesh small enough to hold a minnow; and the best material for the bow is a clean strait-grown briar, cut in winter, bent and fastened in a circle while green, and left in that state till thoroughly seasoned. It will then be very light and very strong, and is to be fastened with well-waxed lay-cord to an iron in form of a crescent, attached by a socket to a staff of fir, about six or seven feet in length, with a blunt iron hook in the bottom thereof, wherewith to disengage your tackle, &c. from any interruption. A smaller net and large mesh is sufficient for inferior fish; but you may often save much time, and avoid much trouble, by such a net as

is above described, in taking minnows for bait, and you may be glad of such a support, in wading strong streams in stony rivers.—*See Plate XII.*

Fish-pannier should be flat, narrow at top and wide at bottom, that a good fish may lie strait in it.

Other and inferior requisites every fishing-book describes, and every angler is acquainted with.

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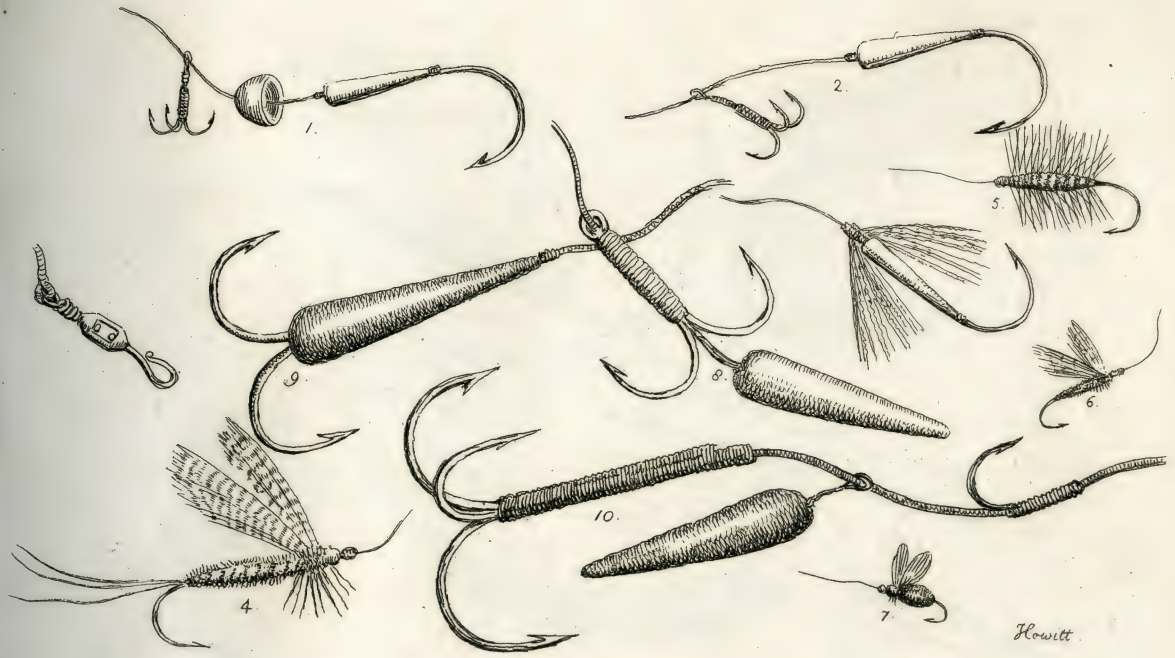

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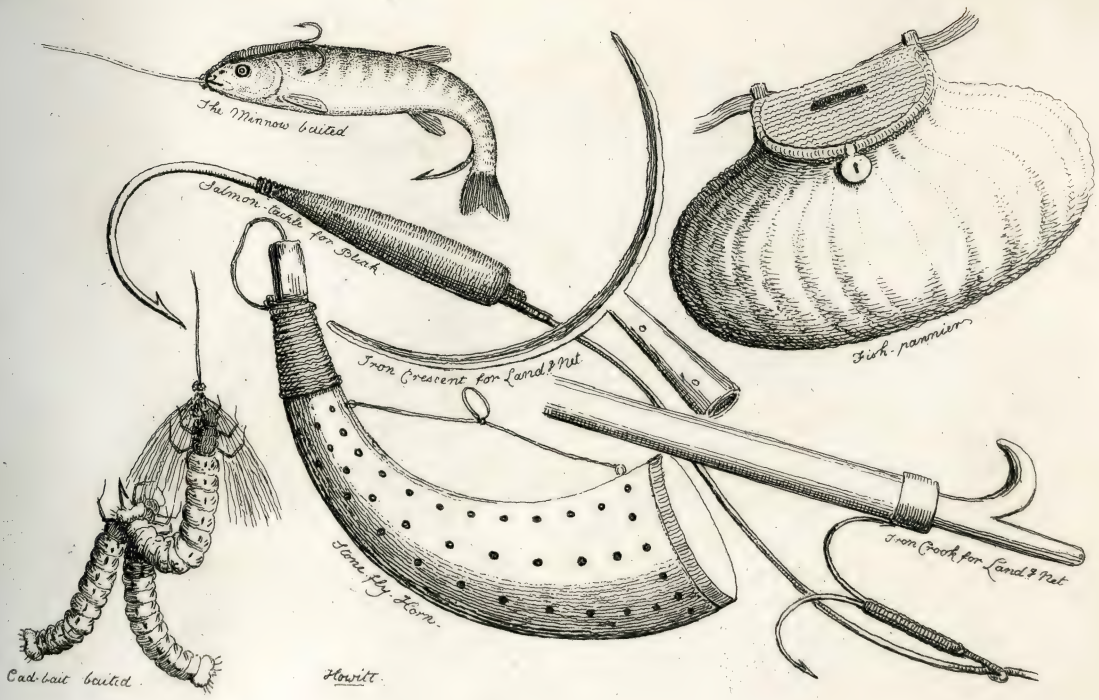
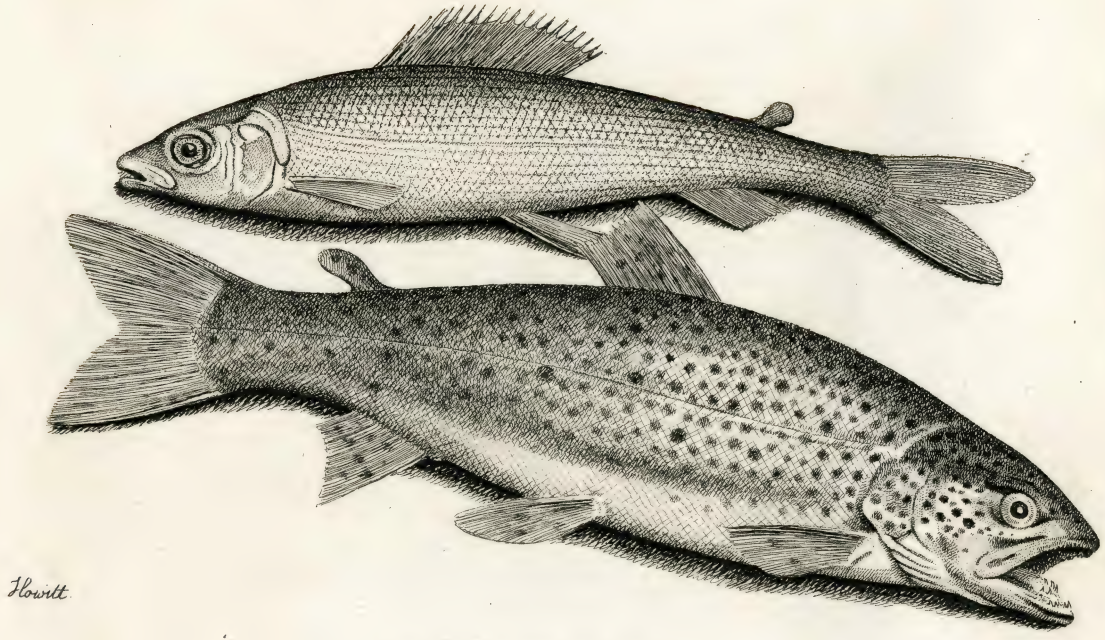

The Minnow baited
Salmon-tackle for Bleak
Iron Crescent for Land & Net
Fish-pannier
Stone-fly Hook
Iron Crook for Land & Net
Cad-bait baited

Howitt



Howitt

Trout and Grayling.

THE

ANGLER'S MANUAL.

TROUT.

TROUT-FISHING is divided into these four very different modes, viz. Worm, Minnow, Cad-bait, and Fly-fishing.

WORM-FISHING.

Rod. A bottom or trolling-rod, about fourteen feet in length, strong, but handy; top, smart in the spring, yet not too stiff.

Wheel. A multiplier, with length of line according to the breadth of the stream: in a general way, about thirty or forty yards.

Hook. In thick water, No. 3 or 4; if the fish run small, No. 5; a good weed or two, or a yard of gut above, with some large shots, or even a bullet, if the stream or eddy is strong enough to keep it in motion. You may then fish clumsily with success, as neither your line nor yourself can be seen.

But as Trout are to be taken in bright water and weather, with the worm, when they will not touch

either minnow or fly, and as there is certainly more art and sportsmanship in fishing the Worm at that time, than some people either imagine or acknowledge, it may be worth while to attend to the following advice:—

Let your rod be of sufficient length and strength, yet perfectly pliable and manageable with one hand; use a wheel, with line enough to reach across the stream;—as you may expect good fish, if there be any.

Your line tapering, of two or three lengths of hair at top, with two or three yards of fine and round gut or grass below; one or two shots, No. 4 or 5, about eight or nine inches from the hook, which should be No. 4 or 5.

Bait with one large well-scoured brandling, or with two smaller ones, and sometimes with one small one only.

In fishing the worm in the usual way, in thick waters, and strong deep eddies, near mill-tails, &c. there is so little art, that if you but let your bait sink to the bottom, the fish, if on the feed, will take, and gorge it too, and then you have nothing to do but to pull away, and as your tackle is so strong, it is six to four that you do not break yourself.

But in fishing the worm in thin streams, and in bright water and weather, a very different process must be followed. Your tackle must be very fine, your hook small (No. 5 or 4), and your baits well scoured and lively. A wheel will enable you to vary the length of your line, as occasion dictates; and though in general it must be as long, or longer than your rod, yet, where there is wood, &c. you may, by shortening it, get at the holds, and still contrive to keep *out of sight*, for completely so to be, must never be forgotten;—kneel, stoop, or stand,—out of sight you must be; and then, if you can lightly and neatly drop in a lively brandling near the likely holds or haunts, in a strong stream, especially near the top of it, let the sun shine ever so bright, be the wind rough

Howitt

Minnow-fishing

or calm, and the water ever so clear, you will kill fish, when they are not to be taken by any other mode.

When the water is open, allow yourself plenty of line, casting it neatly before you, up the stream, and just permitting your bait to run truly on the ground. If the water is shallow, one shot (No. 4) is enough; it is a very easy matter to put on another, if you want it. Always *fish* the worm upwards, and pay particular attention to the eddies at the heads of the streams. When you feel a fish, take good time to raise your hand, and strike as nearly upright as you can; and by these means, in the longest droughts of summer, when the waters are at the lowest, you may, especially if you can rise early, kill good Trout with the worm.

MINNOW-FISHING.

Rod. The same as for the worm, except the top, which may be somewhat stronger.

Wheel and *Wheel-line.* The same.

Line. Two lengths of nine good hairs twisted, with two feet and a half of strong grass or gut below. Where the fish are large, chuse the strongest, clearest, and roundest, you can procure. In joining it to the hair-line, whip the ends of each over neatly with well-waxed silk, and fasten them with small loops, very closely to a double box swivel.

Hook. Plate XI. No. 1, represents a hook, about No 3, with three smaller ones, about No. 8, fastened in a triangle to a small loop of well-waxed silk, to slide on the line; as must be a lead, of a blunt, conical form, somewhat hollowed on the inside of the larger end. To *bait* this, put the point of your large hook through the upper and under lips of the minnow, without tearing them; draw it quite through; insert it again at the mouth, and pass it downwards, till the point appears through the skin, exactly under the tail-fin: bring your sliding triangle of three hooks down close, and bury one of them just below the upper

part of the head of the bait; then press the lead gently to his nose, and try if he will spin well.

Plate XI. No. 2, represents a hook about No. 3, leaded on the shank, so tapering, that the larger end of the lead may well lie in the mouth of a middle-sized minnow, and two or three hooks (No. 7 or 8) fastened as before to a loop, to slide on the line. To *bait* this, insert the large hook into the mouth of the minnow, and bring it out just under the tail: put one of the small hooks into his back, so that the loop may lie close over his nose, and sew up his mouth neatly with one stitch on each side the line: fine orange or yellow silk is best for this purpose. In fitting up minnow tackle, you will find two swivels, two feet asunder, of use.

There are no better methods of fitting up minnow tackle than the above, but many others are contrived and used; indeed, the size of your hooks and bait should be varied to accord with the state of the river, and the weight of the Trout in the water you fish.

The minnow is so generally the food, as to be the principal support of large Trout in almost all waters; so that where there are no minnows, Trout seldom grow to any considerable size. They take them chiefly in the morning and evening. Chuse to fish in a water clearing after a flood, or any other cause which has thickened it, as sheep washing, hushes, flashes, &c. In warm dark weather, if dropping with rain, the better; and bait with the whitest silver-bellied minnows you can get. Take care that your bait turns very quick in the water; for on this your success most materially depends.

Fish always downwards, or sloping across the stream: drop in your minnow gently, a little above any likely hold, whether weed-bed, rock, root, or whatever it may be; let your bait sink a little, then keeping the point of your rod close above the surface of the water, jerk it easily a little way up, or across the stream; let it sink still deeper, and again jerking with a gentle motion of the wrist, keep it continually

under water, and spinning as quick as possible; remembering that you can scarcely fish too deep, if you clear the ground. Never regret your bait being out of sight; you will feel the fish easily enough, if he comes; then take time to raise your hand, and strike as upright as you can: for if you strike in a hurry, and horizontally, you will frequently snatch the bait out of his mouth, whether he will or will not.

They will sometimes take the minnow, even in the still-deeps; but the strongest streams, and their rapid eddies, are the places to be depended on. In these, if there are large Trout in the river, in warm dark weather, you can hardly fail to raise, and kill them too, even in bright water.

Where the fish run very heavy, and the streams are deep, a bleak, or small gudgeon, is better than a minnow. Your tackle must be fitted accordingly, and you must fish exactly in the same manner as with the minnow.

CAD-BAIT FISHING.

To fish the cad-bait, join to one or two lengths of good twisted hairs, a neat double box swivel, and below, two feet of good weed or gut; and use a gentle rod, with a wheel.

Plate XI. No. 3, describes the hook properly leaded, and hackled at top with a mallard feather, dyed, to dress the wing of the green-drake.

Bait, by inserting the point of the hook into the tail of a large yellow cad-bait, and draw it, as little bruised as may be, quite over the lead; hang three more, through the shoulders, on the bend of the hook.

Fish in the quick streams; drop the bait in, neatly, close to a weed-bed, or other hold; let it sink, keeping it continually in a short, quick up-and-down motion; and strike the instant you feel a fish.

Trout, in the months of May and June, till the green-drake comes on very strong, and sometimes

during that season, may be killed with the cad-bait, when nothing else will tempt them: and the largest fish are the most likely to take it.

FLY-FISHING.

Rod. Sufficiently light to be perfectly and pleasantly manageable, and to spring well from the point of the top to the hand; may be varied in length and strength, according to the size of the river and the fish.

Wheel. A multiplier, with suitable length of wove hair line.

Hooks. Adapted to the natural size of the fly imitated; some flies, for Trout, requiring No. 5 or 6, while others cannot be dressed too small. See the usual sizes of the most killing flies, in *Pl. XI. Nos.* 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Fly-lines (as before said) are best made of wove horse-hair, diminishing gradually from the top to the bottom, and are to be had at all the shops: from eight to twelve yards is length sufficient.

As the very feather in the cap of the art of angling is due to dressing flies well, and throwing a line with perfect truth and neatness, these seem particularly worth the attention of every one who aspires at proficiency; and as better instructions for the attainment cannot be given than those in THAT EDITION of the "Complete Angler" referred to in this work, page i, instead of changing words, without alteration of matter, the following quotation is subjoined:—"When "you have fixed your rod properly, with your winch "thereon, and brought your line from it through the "rings of your rod, loop on to it, by the strongest "end, your foot-length, which should be about three "yards and a half long, made of good, strong, single "silk-worm guts, well tied, and the knots neatly "whipped, running a very little finer towards the "bottom-end, at which place there must be a neatly-"whipped loop also; then take your end-fly or "stretcher, which should be made to one or two "lengths of good level gut, full as fine as, or a little

" finer than, the bottom link of your foot-length, tied " and whipped neatly together, and looped nicely at " the end also; loop this to the end of your gut- " length, and then your drop-fly just above a knot, " where it is whipped about a yard or more from the " end-fly; to hang from the line not more than two or " three inches. If you chuse to fish with more, " keep them all about the same distance, and observe " that, if your droppers be larger than, or even as " large as, your stretcher, you will not be able to throw " a good line; but a beginner should never use more " than one fly.

" When thus prepared, let out the line about half " as long again as the rod, and holding that properly " in one hand, and the line, near to the fly, in the " other, give your rod a motion from right to left, " and as you move the rod backwards, in order to " throw out the line, let go the line out of your hand " at the same time, and try several throws at this " length; then let out more line, and try that; still " using more and more, till you can manage any " length needful, but about nine yards is quite suffi- " cient for a learner to practise with; and observe, " that in raising your line in order to throw it again, " you should wave your rod a little round your head, " and not bring it directly backwards, nor must you " return the line too soon, nor until it has gone its " length behind you, or you will certainly whip off " your end-fly. There is a great art in making your " line fall light on the water, and shewing your flies " well to the fish. The best way I can direct is, that " when you have thrown out your line, contriving " to let it fall as lightly and naturally as possible, you " should raise your rod gently, and by degrees, some- " times with a kind of gentle, trembling, hand, as it " were, which will bring the flies on a little towards " you, still letting them go down with the stream; " but never draw them against it, for it is unnatural; " and before the line comes too near you, throw out " again. When you see a fish rise at the natural fly,

" throw about a yard above him, but not directly over " his head, and let your fly (or flies) move gently to- " wards him, which will shew it him in a more natu- " ral form, and tempt him the more to take it. Expe- " rience and observation alone, however, can make an " angler a complete adept in the art, so as to enable " him to throw his fly behind bushes and trees, into " holes, under banks, and other places mentioned as " the Trouts' haunts, and where the best fish are to " be found."

But to dress a fly well, so as to imitate the colours and form of the insect to be represented, sufficiently to deceive the quick-eyed and wary fish which feed upon them, is a species of ingenuity very pleasing in the practice, and very materially, at times, necessary to success in fly-fishing. It should be recommended to every person, desirous of finding sport, to endeavour to attain the knack of dressing one as neatly, as speedily, and as perfectly, as possible; experience proving, that fish will feed eagerly, for hours, perhaps, on one kind of fly, and that then they will, every one, almost instantly, desert their late favourite for another species, though the former shall still continue in great numbers on the water; and as people can hardly expect to carry every fly in season, ready made, about them, necessity may be said to urge every man, who wishes to enjoy this sport in perfection, to take the amusing trouble of learning to dress a fly neatly for himself.

For this purpose, the reader shall not be puzzled by printed directions, either new or old; but he is advised to study and practise under such masters of the art as he may meet with,—and many are to be found in every country where Trout are common. If he has no friend or servant capable of instructing him, a trifling recompence will procure him excellent lessons and examples from any of those people who practise fly-dressing for a livelihood. If he chuses to consult books, Cotton and Taylor will give him the best advice on the subject; to them, therefore,

leave is begged to refer him, and in them, with Hawkins's Notes, he will find lists of flies sufficient: but he is requested ever to remember, that in many shallow, quick-running, transparent, Northern and Welsh waters, no *dubbed* flies whatever will answer his purpose so well as a small hackled feather and a piece of fine silk for the body, dressed on the smallest hooks that can be procured.

With the natural fly, many and good fish are taken, principally with the stone-fly or green-drake; though the flesh-fly, house-fly, and some others, may be used at times with much amusement.

The stone-fly is only found in numbers, and well taken on rivers which run rapidly over beds of pebbles and rocks; and Trout feed on them, chiefly, very early in the mornings and late in the evenings. *Fish* with a good wheel, and a line a little longer than your rod, of choice gut or grass, for two yards next the bottom. Let your hook be about No. 5, very short in the shank; and *bait*, by passing it through the shoulders of the fly, between the wings, leaving his legs downwards. Contrive to let the air favour you, by carrying your bait before you to the haunts in a strong stream, where fish may be expected to lie, which are generally near the head thereof, under some rock or great stone, or in a whirling eddy. Drop your fly gently on the water, and let him sail easily towards you, on the surface. When a fish rises, do not snatch it away from him, nor suffer him to pull off the fly, and return you the hook; but be careful in striking, for very great fish, and many, are killed by these means. Collect your flies in the middle of the former day, (by turning over the stones, you will find plenty in the season,) and preserve them in a short thick cow-horn, hollowed out, and perforated with small holes to give them air; a wooden top being fitted into the large end, with a hole in the other, secured by a stopper, big enough for a single fly to pass at a time.

The green-drake breeds chiefly in rivers whose

banks are sedgy and woody, and may be fished, with great effect, in the same manner as the stone-fly; though, from the nature of the water, it is generally better to fish it by dipping or bobbing. Your wheel always enables you to lengthen or shorten your line, and one or two lengths of about eight hairs twisted is, on that account, enough, with a good grass or gut at bottom. Where there is much wood, your line cannot be too short, as you must often fish under the thickest boughs which hang over the water. Put one shot, No. 4, to steady your line, six inches above the hook, No. 6; keep very carefully out of sight, letting your fly drop gently on the water, where you must keep it rippling the surface by a tremulous motion of the hand. *Bait*, by putting two flies on your hook, through the shoulders, with their legs downwards, one head standing one way, another the other. In sunny days, when fish will not feed in the open streams, you will often hear them rise among the sedges and under the wood, and there, if you are expert, you may be sure to raise them at least.

Trout are to be killed in this way with the flesh-fly, or house-fly; but they rather belong to the chub. The fern-beetle, or bracken-clock, will sometimes kill well.

GRAYLING OR UMBER.

GRAYLING are taken in the same manner, and by the same flies and worms, as the trout: even the minnow they will *not* refuse always, the editor having killed two with that bait. But as they are in best season in the autumn and winter, if you chuse to fish for them then, let it be with very fine tackle and a float.

A grub, gentles, a brandling, or small marsh-worm, are the best baits. Plumb your depth carefully, and fish from three to six inches from the bottom.

They lie at that time in deep quiet eddies, and runs of water near a stream.

SALMON.

Rod. Sixteen or eighteen feet in length, very strong and pliable.

Wheel. A multiplier, to hold eighty yards of strong wove hair-line. Instead of a landing-net, use a *gaff*, which is a tough stick, that will bend a little; to the smaller end of which should be fastened a very large well-barbed hook. This gaff may be conveniently carried, bent by a string like a bow, and slung over the shoulder, out of the way of your line. To use it, in landing a fish, slip off the string from one end, and inserting the hook into the gills of the fish, drag or lift him out, for which purpose a landing-net would be too small.

Salmon-fishing varies so little from the mode of taking large trout, that in treating of the one, the other is unavoidably explained; the strength and size of your tackle and bait constituting the principal difference.

In trolling for Salmon, if there are bleak in the water, this fish will be found a much better bait than the minnow; and your tackle must be fitted accordingly, and use at least two good swivels, within six feet of your hooks. The minnow tackle, before described, will (on a larger scale) be found as good as any. Be very careful in chusing gut for your hook-links: there is little to be had, strong and round enough for the purpose; in general, twist two or three very good ones together;—though gimp is by many preferred to gut. Never hurry yourself in striking a fish, but give him time to get the bait well into his mouth, and strike as perpendicularly as you can.

To fish the worm, use a large strong hook, armed on two yards of three very good guts twisted, and with two or three swivels, and a smaller hook whipped on, four inches above the top of the shank of the

Howitt

Salmon.

great one. *Bait*, by putting two well-scoured lob-worms on in this manner:—"The first must be "drawn above the top of the shank of the large hook, "and the small hook run through the head; then "take the other worm, and draw that up the hook, "some way above the shank, and drawing the other "down, let them hang with their tails one above the "other, keeping the point of the large hook from "coming through the worm. Having baited, lay "your worms at the bottom of a likely part of a "stream; and holding your rod still, keep out of sight, "as carefully as possible; if in a short time you have "not a bite, move your line gently up the stream, "and your worms will play and shew themselves by "means of the swivels, and thus entice the fish to "take them."

Do not remain long in one place; for the fish will soon take the bait, if they are on the feed; and be sure not to strike in a hurry.

This method (like all strong worm-fishing) is most successful when the water is too thick for the fly.

Salmon-flies are to be dressed very large and gaudy; and a list of very good ones will be found in that edition of "The Complete Angler" before recommended.

And in this place let the angler be admonished once for all, that whenever he has hooked a heavy fish, of any kind, never to suffer his rod to incline forwards, but to keep the top as perpendicular to the butt as possible; by which means his wheel-line will run out more freely, and with less danger of interruption, and the weight and strength of the fish will be exerted against the elasticity of the rod; thereby easing the line, the hook, and the hold you have of his mouth. And, indeed, should you be fishing without a wheel, and not keep your rod upright when you have hooked a good fish, you may depend on his running instantly to the end of your line, and as certainly on his regaining his liberty by one violent effort.

PIKE.

Rod. Strong, yet pliable, fourteen feet in length, with a stronger top for snap-fishing.

Wheel. To hold about thirty or forty yards of strong wove hair-line.

Gaff. As for salmon; or a large landing-net.

There are two modes of fishing for Pike, called *trolling*, and *snapping*.

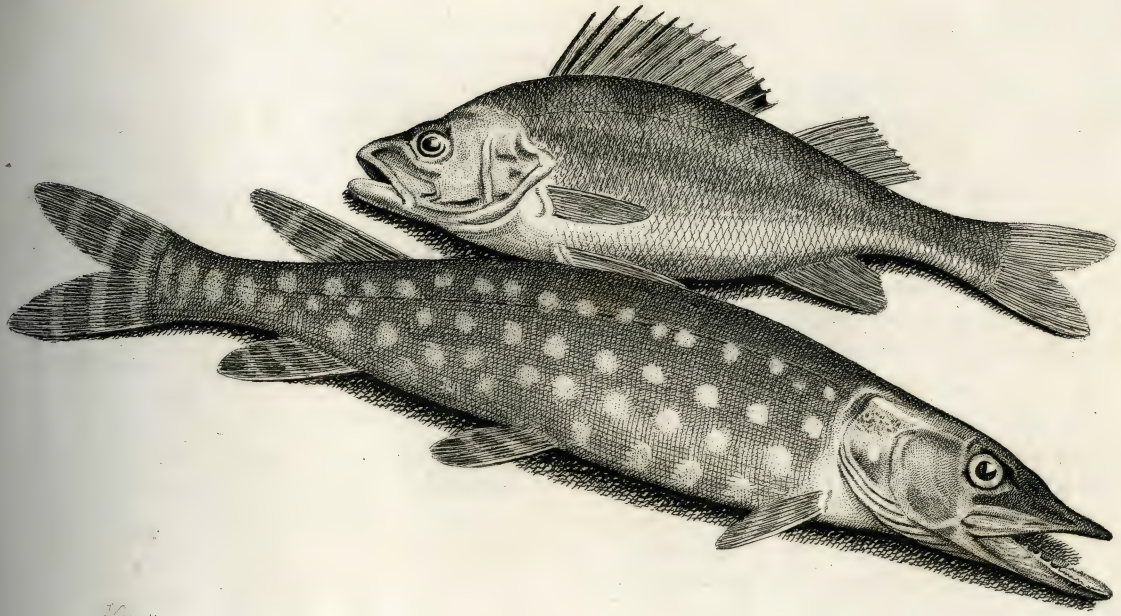
In trolling, you permit the fish, with all possible ease to himself, to take away the bait to his hold, be it far or near, and there to lie, undisturbed by you, till he has pouched it, which is often ten minutes, or more; but which you may perceive when he has effected, by the line beginning to move again. This is the signal for striking him; and do this strongly and perpendicularly, and then play him, carefully, till he is tired.

In snapping, the Pike is to be struck as soon as he has taken the bait well into his mouth. Strike, if you can, the contrary way to that which he runs; or, at least, strike upright.

TROLLING FOR PIKE.

Let your hook be armed on a piece of good yellow gimp, about a foot long. *Plate XI. No.* 8, represents the generally-useful size of a double trolling-hook, to which a lead, of a conical form, is fastened by a short chain: to bait this, put the lead in the mouth of the bait-fish, whether small trout, roach, dace, bleak, or gudgeon; but, where it is to be had, a gudgeon is generally to be preferred,—and sew it close with a needle and small thread.

Plate XI. No. 9, represents a double hook, leaded conically on the shank; to *bait* which, insert your baiting needle into the mouth of the bait-fish, and



Perch & Pike

bring it out at the vent, drawing your gimp through with it; you may likewise tie it neatly, or sew it fast, just above the tail, with white thread.

To troll with a live bait, whip a single or a double hook on a piece of gimp, about a foot long, and leaded with three or four swan-shot. *Fish* with a large cork float, and *bait* by hanging on your bait-fish by a good hold through the root of the back fin. This method will be found the most killing of any. Your bait-fish, which should be procured before you begin to fish, may be kept alive, in a proper kettle for the purpose, or a common tin can, often changing the water. In every mode of trolling, be very careful that your line runs out freely, when a Pike has taken your bait; as any sudden check would almost infallibly prick, or alarm him, and cause him instantly to drop it.

SNAPPING FOR PIKE.

The dead baits may be fished as well in the manner following, as by any of the numerous modes practised:—

Plate XI. No. 10, represents three hooks, whipped on gimp, in a triangular manner, and a conical piece of lead to run on the gimp by a small loop at the larger end. To *bait* this, insert the baiting-needle at the vent, and draw the gimp by the swivel, through the mouth of the bait, till the hook lies close to the vent; put the loop of the lead over the gimp, and press the lead into the mouth and throat of the fish, which should then be neatly sewed up, and a lesser hook whipped on the gimp, close to his nose.

But for a live bait, the double spring snap-hook is much to be preferred. *Bait*, by hanging a live bait-fish fast on the small hook by the back fin, and fish with a large cork-float.

Remember always to cut away one of the fins of the *dead* bait-fish, close at the gills, and another at the vent on the contrary side; it will play, in fishing, infinitely better.

In trolling or snapping, your dead bait must not be suffered to lie still in the water. Let it be dropped in as lightly as you can, and permitted to sink a little; then gently raised, then allowed to sink lower, now drawn a little this way, now that, and, by short and gentle jerks, kept in continual motion, to imitate that of a living fish.

If you are to fish far out from the bank, collect some coils of your line on your hand; hold them easily, and suddenly letting them go, assisted by the spring of your rod, and the weight of the bait-fish and lead, you will soon attain the knack of throwing your line, with great certainty, to a considerable distance. Be very careful to let your bait drop gently into the water, and as it approaches you in fishing, gather your line again gradually on your hand, and be ready to throw again. Accustom yourself to fish deep enough; and remember, that your line must always be ready to run freely, the instant a fish takes your bait.

The Pike feeds boldest in clear water, and in warm, dark, windy weather. No kind of fish comes amiss to him, when feeding; but a gudgeon will fish longer, and shew as well as any. A bleak, or a small roach or dace, does well, and in rivers where trout breed, a small trout is an excellent bait.

Howitt

Pike · fishing.

P. 10.

Chub, Roach, and Dace.

Howitt.

CHUB.

CHUB-FISHING is sometimes, and in particular rivers, productive of good sport, though the fish are not of value; but to practise it, a man must learn the use of the *corrocle* or *coble*—a boat of wicker work, covered with a pitched hide, and guided by a paddle. These are much used by the Welsh, and are not uncommon on the lower parts of the Severn, &c.

With a long, light, smart rod, and a line a little longer, a small float of a single quill, a strong hook about No. 4, or 3, no shot, and a bag of slugs, commonly called black snails,—a man launches his corrocle, and, seating himself on the thwart, directs it with his paddle, near the side of the wood which overhangs the deep gentle streams. Floating slowly along, he throws his line before him, almost as a fly-line is thrown; his hook baited with a black snail, slit with a sharp knife across the body about half way through, and the gut taken out to shew the white inside. If the Chub are on the feed, which is generally the case in a bright water and warm weather, they rise with greediness, and must be instantly struck. The editor has seen thirty or forty pounds taken in a morning, before six o'clock; for the fisher must begin by the first break of day.

But, in general, Chub-fishing is scarcely worth an article to itself. They are frequently taken, whether you will or not, in Trout-fishing,—the fly, the worm, and the minnow, being equally acceptable at times; and they often haunt and feed in the strongest streams, as well as in the quietest and deepest holes.

If you would amuse yourself, by bobbing or dipping for them in a hot day, under the boughs, you may have sport, and sometimes take a good Trout, where you did not expect to find one. *Bait* with two flesh-flies, or house-flies, or a green-drake, or a beautifully-coloured caterpillar, which breeds in clusters on the willow, and in some places is called the withy-grain—a bait which, at certain times, a Chub cannot refuse.

FLOAT-FISHING IN GENERAL.

LET your *Rod* be long enough, and in some places it cannot be too long, but conveniently light, and so smart in the spring as to strike at the tip of the whalebone.

In most kinds of float-fishing it is not customary to use a *Wheel;* but the facility with which, by that means, you may either lengthen or shorten your line, and the propriety of having no more above your float than you absolutely need, should recommend the practice; independently of the occasion you will have for line, if you hook a heavier fish than you had reason to expect. Large barbel are often hooked in roach-fishing—trout, in barbel—and pike, in perch; and without a wheel, you must content yourself (as many do) with the satisfaction of telling, that "you have been broken by a good fish." In every kind of fishing, the *finer* your tackle, the more sport you are likely to have, and the finer you fish, the more need have you of a wheel.

Let your *Float* in a river be suited to the state of the water and weather, always large enough to carry lead sufficient to steady it completely, and to sink your bait quickly, and no larger.——Cork floats are necessary in windy weather and in strong streams, even in Roach-fishing: but when the water allows you to use a nicely-tapered one, made of quills only, do so.

You may certainly, in a bright water, hook more roach with a single hair, than with the finest grass or gut; but the nicest hand cannot make sure of a very good fish with it; without reckoning on the other accidents which are liable to break or strain it.

Never think time lost in *plumbing* your depth, for your success materially depends on fishing to an inch.

Float-fishing.

BARBEL.

Rod. A strong trolling-rod.

Wheel, and strong silk or hair line.

Line. Three or four yards of silk line, with a strong gut for the hook-link.

Hook. No. 4, 5, or 6, strong wire. You may fish two,—one being tied on a piece of gut, three inches long, and fastened by a loop to the upper end of the hook-link.

Lead. Heavier or lighter, according to the strength and depth of the stream. A coffin-shaped lead is best, with a hole through it lengthwise, to suffer the line to run without dragging the lead; this will lie in one certain place in the midst of your ground-bait, and is much better than a bullet. One large shot, just above the hook-link, to prevent the lead from slipping lower. As you must remain long in a place, you may very well fish two rods.

A *Float* is unnecessary.

Bait with a well-scoured marsh-worm, or lob-worm, or a piece of white well-soaked graves. Fresh gentles may be tried on the upper hook.

Ground-bait with balls of graves, well soaked in water till quite soft, and mixed with clay. If you have opportunity, ground-bait the place for two or three nights before you fish; but the less sparingly you do so, the more sport you will find.

They haunt the tail of a wear, or a deep natural stream near a bridge, or the like; and are so heavy, strong, and cunning, that they afford excellent sport, though they are good for nothing else.

PERCH.

Rod. A common strong-bottom rod.

Line. Silk or hair, good gut, weed, or (if you bait with the live minnow, which is the best and most pleasant mode of fishing) fine gimp at bottom, especially where there are pike, which will very frequently be taken by that bait.

Float. Should be of cork; in windy weather larger than in still, but it never need be much above the middle size. Your line shotted, about nine inches above the hook, sufficiently to keep it steady.

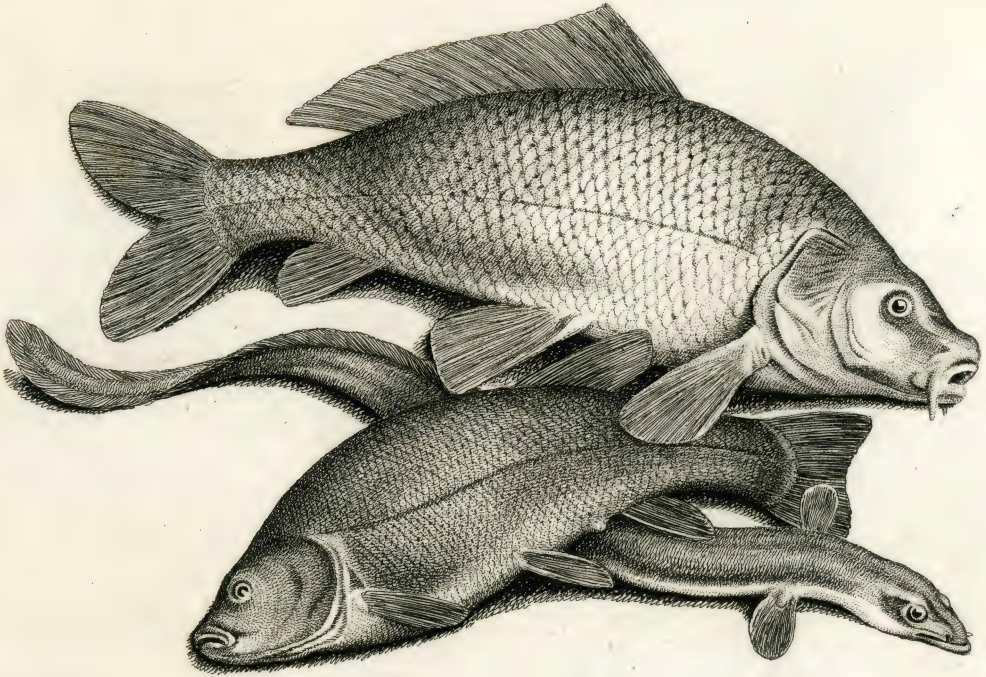
Hook. No. 4, 5, or 6, according to the size of the fish you have reason to expect.

Baits. Of worms, the brandling is generally the best; a well-scoured marsh worm is very good; gentles they will sometimes take; but for large Perch there is no bait comparable to a live silver-bellied small or middle-sized minnow; which should be hung by a good hold, but as carefully as possible, through the upper lip. *Fish* near the bottom with the worm; but between six inches from it to mid-water with the minnow. The cooler the weather, the deeper you should fish.

When you have a bite, do not be in a hurry; give time enough, and let your float go some way under water before you strike. The Perch is too voracious; in general, easily to leave a bait he has taken, and his mouth is so wide, and the parts about it so thin, that he is very often lost for want of that little patience in the crisis, which is to reward the angler for all he has before exerted. If you see a Pike take your minnow, let him go away with it, and treat him as if you had purposely trolled for him.

Gentle deep streams, eddies, and hollows under banks, are the likeliest places to find Perch in.

They feed best in sultry and gloomy weather, and will sometimes take any kind of worm or small fish, gentles, small frogs, and even *large artificial flies*, as the editor has once experienced.



Holwitt

Carp, Tench, and Eel.

CARP.

Rod. The longer the better, and let it be strong. A wheel will be useful if the fish are large and the water of any considerable breadth; for the Carp is a very strong fish.

Line. Three or four yards of fine silk, with a good gut or grass for the hook-link.

Lead. Shaped as the barbel lead, but small, just sufficient to sink a swan or goose quill float, in standing water; in a river let it be a very small cork, one shot below the lead.

Hook. No. 4, 5, or 6.

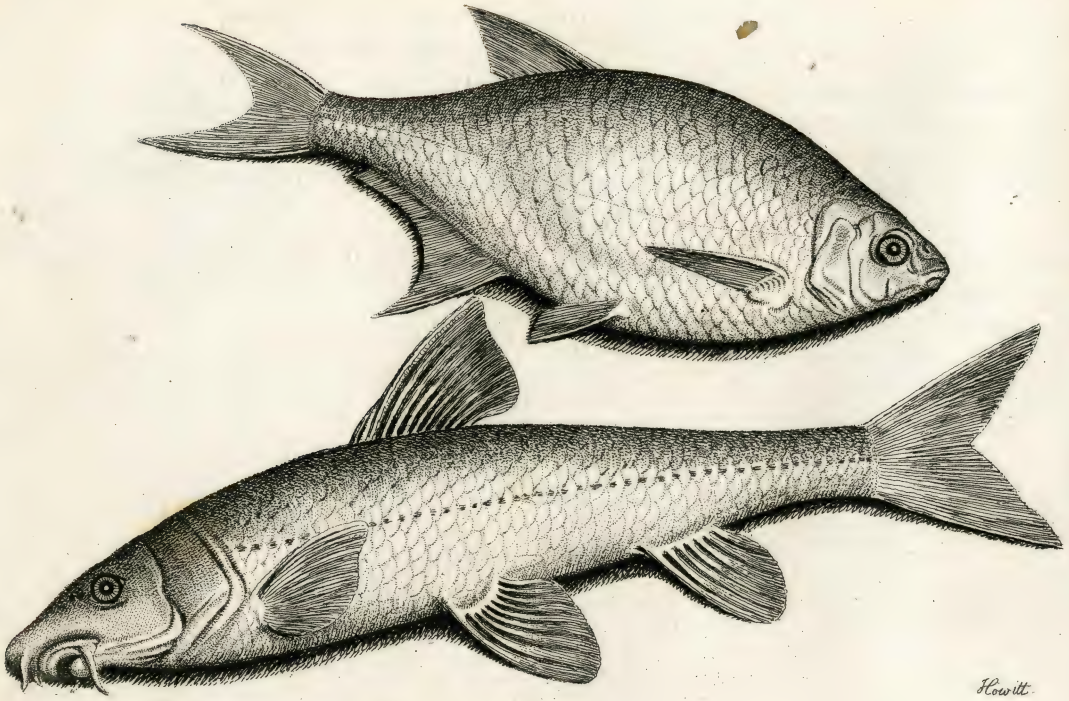
Baits for Carp are many. The best, in general, are marsh-worms well scoured; and pastes, receipts for which are as various and numerous as for the tooth-ach; but fine bread, with a very little water, worked up very tough, with or without the addition of some strong scented oil or drug, as coriander, tar, &c. &c. seems to answer as well as any thing. In short, in some waters you may catch Carp any quiet warm day, with a worm of any kind, or with almost any sort of paste; and in others, do what you will, your patience will overbalance your success.—*Ground-bait*, if you have opportunity, with fresh scalded malt, or bread and bran, or pollard mixed with treacle; and the longer the fish have been used to feed uninterruptedly in one place, the more likely you will be to catch them there.

Fish very early in the morning during the hot months, in warm dark weather. Let your lead, as before directed, be heavy enough to sink your float, which (having plumbed your depth the night before) you must set so as just to appear above the water. Lay in your line or lines very gently, and keep entirely out of sight. When you have a bite, let your

float go well away before you strike; should the fish prove large, give him time enough before you attempt to land him.

Heads of ponds, deeps, and still holes in rivers, within reach of the bank, are the places to be tried; for you need not attempt to fish for them from a boat.

They will likewise sometimes take a cherry or a green pea; and you may kill them, in a hot bright day, with a light line, without shot or float, by throwing a small marsh-worm or brandling, so as to drop on the leaves of water plants, under which they lie, and drawing it off very gently into the water near the fish.



Howitt.

Bream and Barbel.

TENCH.

Rod. As for Carp, and use a wheel.

Line. Silk or hair, with three yards of good gut or grass, finer towards the bottom.

Float. Swan or goose quill, or in rivers a small cork.

Hook. No. 5, 6, or rather 7.

Ground-bait as for carp. The manner of taking Tench is nearly the same.

Bait with a well-scoured marsh or small dew worm, or large red worm, or gentles; a wasp grub is, in the season, very good. If with gentles or wasp grubs, throw in a few, every now and then, about your float. Pastes of many kinds are recommended, but none are better than the sweet, and scented with tar or coriander, &c. *Fish* in warm still weather, in the summer months. They lie chiefly near pond-heads, sluices, &c. where the water is deep.

BREAM,

ARE to be taken in the same manner, and much in the same places, with carp and tench. They are chiefly found in large ponds and meres, and very seldom in running water.

ROACH.

Rod. As long as you please, of Bamboo cane, but not hollowed through the joints: smart in the spring of the top. If you fish where large chub or barbel frequent, use a small *Wheel*, with a fine silk wheel line; as, though more liable than hair to entangle in the upper ring of the rod, it will lie closer, and strike quicker; on which your success materially depends.

Line. Should be of the smallest gut you can procure, at least for two yards next the hook; hair twisted above.

Hook. No. 9, 10, or 11; the brighter the water the smaller the hook.

Float. Must be adapted to the stream; if strong and deep, a taper cork; if quiet, a long quill float is better. Your shot must be very small, and sufficient to balance your float very nicely and steadily, so that the least touch may be perceived.

Ground-bait with bread mixed up well with boiling water and bran or pollard, to a tough consistence, and made into small firm balls, with a stone in each, to sink them.

Bait with three or four well-scoured gentles, the yellower the better. Plumb your depth exactly, and if the water varies, from tide or any other cause, be sure to plumb again, and *fish* within an inch or two of the ground. Strike the instant your float gives warning, the quicker the better; but remember your tackle is fine, and do not break your line, because you cannot wait, after striking, to feel if your fish is heavy or small. The brighter the water, the finer you must fish; and you will find, particularly in a boat, the convenience of your rod being composed of short joints.

In the early part of summer, Roach will take a cad-bait better than any thing; but they are then all among the weeds, and out of season, which does not begin till September, and continues till February or March, during which they resort to the still-deeps.

DACE,

ARE to be fished for in the same manner, in winter, and will be taken among the Roach.

They will likewise take, at the top, any natural or artificial fly in season, and towards the latter end of summer especially, the natural grasshopper, the house and flesh flies, and the artificial ant-fly.

GUDGEON.

YOUR *Tackle* fine, and your *Hook* No. 8 or 9.

A small cork or quill *Float;* your *Bait* a red worm, just touching the ground.

Gudgeons are taken best when they will follow the rake after the middle of summer. Rake the ground well before you commence fishing, and as often as you find them begin to fail, rake with a long heavy pole, headed with an iron cross, that turns on a spindle. They then lie in gentle streams, from two to six feet deep, with a fine gravelly bottom. But to use for baits, the best way is to catch enough in a casting net.

MINNOW,

IS a fish of very great consequence to the sportsman. He furnishes the principal food of all the better kinds of sporting fish, and one of the best baits, and the most pleasant modes of fishing to take them by; yet, though there be millions in the water, it is extremely difficult at times, (just after a flood in particular,) to procure one to fish with. Persons fond of Minnow-fishing, should furnish themselves with a small silk casting-net, and by this they may be sure of baits when they are to be gotten no other way; though a landing-net, about two feet in diameter, with a small mesh that will retain them, and a long staff to it, will often catch plenty, by being laid on the bottom of the edge of a stream where they haunt, and kept very still till they begin to swim over it, and then suddenly snatched upright out of the water; but this they will not come near at all times; and if you have not a casting-net for the purpose, you must angle for them.

Take a very fine line, about as long as your rod, with some lengths of the smallest gut at bottom; three of the least hooks an inch and half distant, with one shot above them; and use, if you please, a very small float. *Bait* with a little bit of brandling, red worm, or with a single gentle.

In fishing with the minnow, never attempt to bait with any but the whitest and most silver-bellied you can get, and chuse the small or middle-sized.

THE LOACH,

Is a very good bait at particular seasons, for the Eel; but I think the sportsman has little occasion for him.

BULL-HEAD,

May be used, if you please, for the same purpose.

PRICKLE-BACK,

Is said to be as good a bait as the minnow, or better, for the Perch, in pond-fishing. His spines must be cut away. He may be caught with a small hook, and a little bit of red worm or a maggot. He frequents stagnated waters, ditches, and small inlets of rivers, &c.

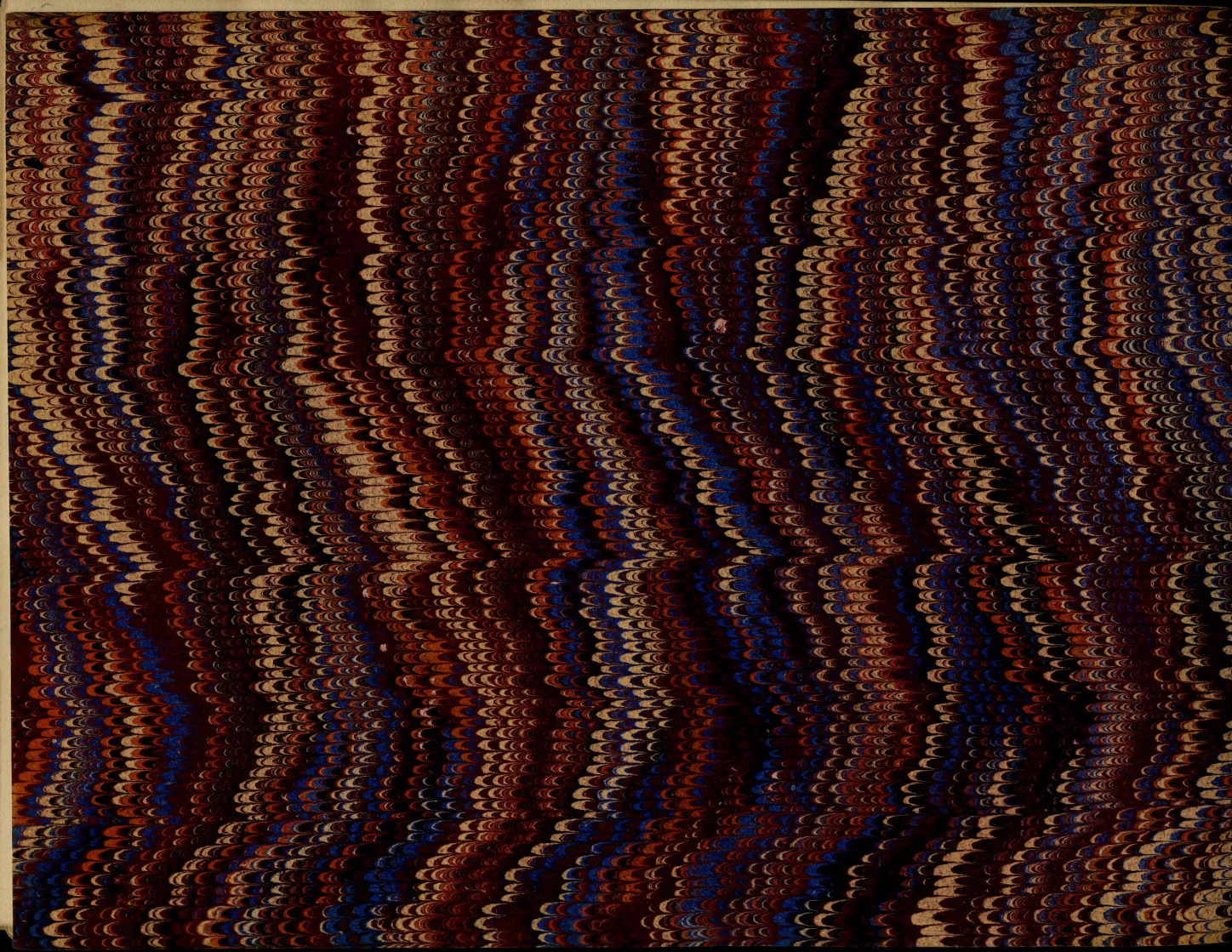
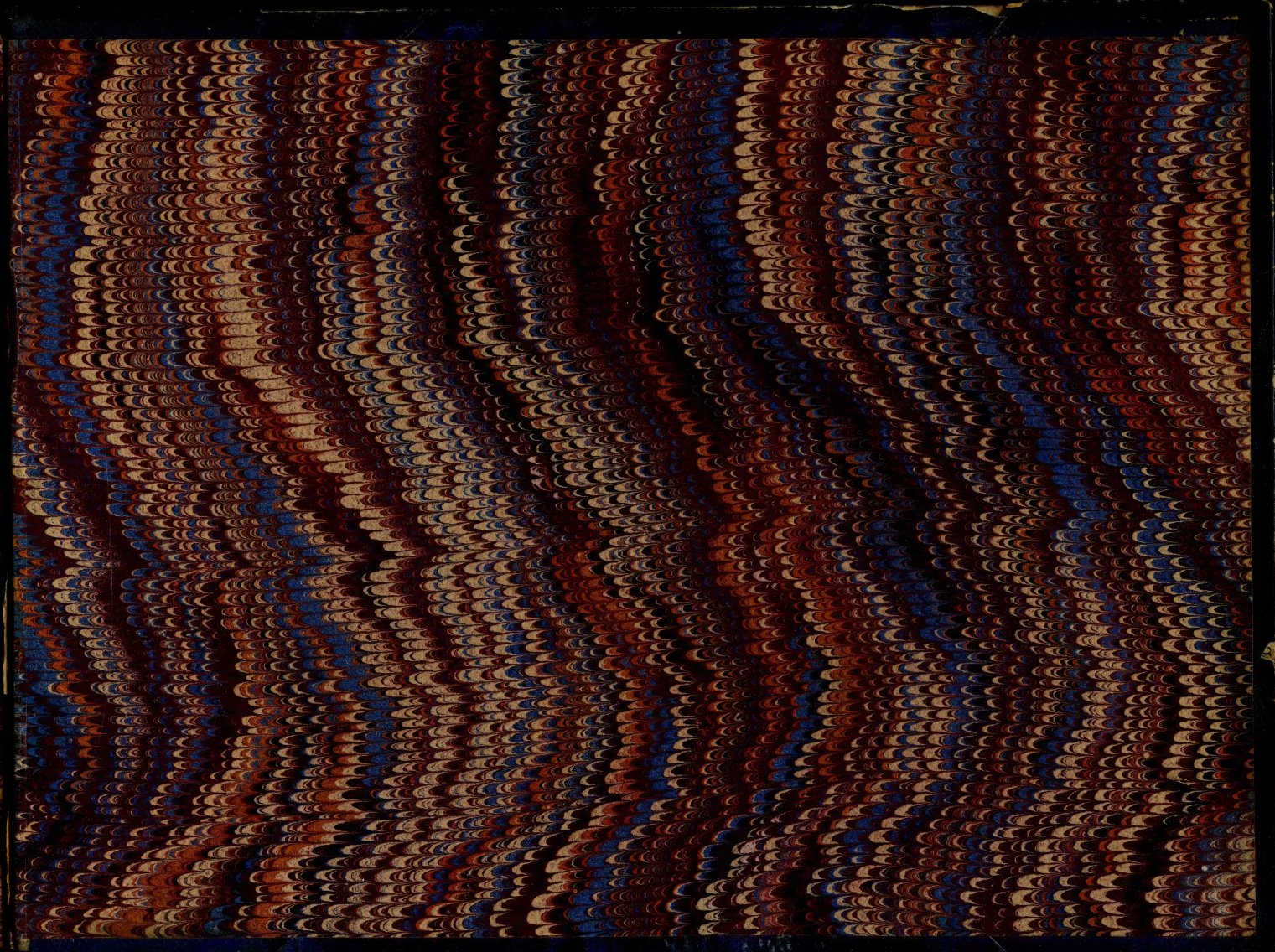
BLEAK.

FISH for Bleak with a very fine hair line, with two or three lengths of the smallest gut at the bottom, on which should be two or three of the very least hooks that are made, a little above each other. *Bait* with a gentle upon each, and throw in a few now and then, to draw them together; or you may take them with any of the smallest artificial flies in season. As they are an excellent bait, they are well worth taking the trouble to catch. They are most numerous in still holes and deep eddies: the upper parts of most rivers are entirely without them.

EEL.

THIS fish, however excelling in taste and nutriment, certainly conduces very little to the sport of the angler. They feed principally in the night, and to take them, the best method is, to set bank-rods, or to lay night-lines in the evening, drawing them before it is thoroughly light in the morning. Take as many lengths, of three or four yards, or less, of lay-cord as you please, and let the hook-link to each be about twenty sound horse hairs, very lightly twisted; lead them with the weight of a pistol bullet, towards the top of the hook link. *Bait* them with a large dew-worm, well scoured, or in the height of summer, with a minnow; in which case, introduce the point of the hook at the vent of the bait-fish, and bring it out at his mouth; be provided with a short willow stick, forked at the end, to each line; to which having fastened it, drop the bait into any hole likely for an Eel, and stick the other end, which should be cut sharp, fast in the bank; or, for broad rivers, make long lines of the same materials, with five or six hooks a yard and half distant from each other; lead them in several places. *Bait* as the former, and after tying each end to a heavy stone, lay them at the bottom, where you please. You may draw them easily, by a light pole, with a hook at the end; and thus you may take Eels, sometimes, in plenty.

To fish for them with the rod, in the day-time, is but a dirty and laborious undertaking; at least, in the opinion of the editor, it is neither worth teaching nor learning.

THE END.

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